

Murd'ring Ministers

Issue #26

November 21, 1980

STUFF

MURD'RING MINISTERS is a gamezine dedicated to the play of postal DIPLOMACY and other postal multi-player wargames. The cost of a 12 issue subscription is \$5.50. Gamefees vary so check out the GAME OPENINGS section if you are interested in joining a new game. MM is published once a month (approx.) utilizing three week deadlines. That little old Main Minister who prints this journal is me, Ron Brown, 1528 El Sereno Pl., Bakersfield, CA 93304. The telephone number is (805) 834-8409.

Well, make sure you check out the Readers' Poll Analysis this issue -- you'll be able to tell where the readership stands regarding various features in MM, publishing policies, rising costs, etc. See pg. 3.

Speaking of which: I'm going to try something on an experimental basis. I'm going to limit each issue of MM to 12 pages. Here's why. It costs 15¢ for 1st class postage up to 12 pages. If the issue is forced to run over that amount I have mailed in the past at 3rd class (20¢). But here's the rub: there have been some people facing a longer delay with the 3rd class mailing. I know for a fact that a few zines I receive that have been coming 3rd class have taken a long time getting here -- especially east coast zines. I assume people who live on the east coast are faced with the same situation when receiving their MM from the west coast. So I am going to try something a bit different; something that was suggested by more than one person in their Readers' Poll response. I am going to keep MM at 12 pages/issue for many reasons. However, I will from time to time have articles, letters, editorials, etc. which won't fit into the 'regular' issue of MM. Whenever these have accumulated enough to fill an issue I'll mail them in a 'special' MM -- no game results just reading material. I can't say exactly how often these will be printed. But I can guarantee it will not be every month. Please see the Readers' Poll Analysis for more on this. I welcome your comments.

New zines are popping up all over. Great! It seems as though the postal DIP hobby is continuing to grow. If you are wanting to fill up more of your spare time with another DIP game you might try one of these new zines. As far as I know they all have game openings. Don't forget to send a stamp along when you request your sample:

LONE STAR DIPLOMAT - "the national Diplomacy journal of Texas" is published by Mike Conner, 3214 Beverly Rd., Austin, TX 78703. Subscription rate is \$4.50/10 issues. Reg. DIP is \$3.00 plus a \$1.50 NMR deposit. LSD (love those initials) is published monthly and features possibly the best repro in the hobby. This is one to keep an eye on; it looks like a winner.

INVASION - is a new New York zine published by Bruce Schneier, 455 East 17th St., Brooklyn, NY 11226. Bruce publishes monthly (?) and has game openings in DIPLOMACY (\$3.00), MACHIAVELLI (\$4.00), and KINGMAKER (\$4.00). Subscriptions
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MORE STUFF

are only 3 for \$1.00 (\$4.00/12 issues). Some of the political commentary included in #5 was "Anderson's Running Mate - I've always thought that John Anderson lost the election when he picked Lucy for his running mate. Out of all possible choices, Lucy was probably the least desirable. Sure, she's had a lot of television exposure, but old reruns hardly justify her candidacy for the ((Vice)) Presidency. Everyone knows that she's always getting herself into trouble, but think of what would happen if she fools around with the nation instead of Ricky's nightclub act. And who is ~~x~~ she going to put in the cabinet? Fred and Ethel!!! No, Anderson should have picked a political leader for his running mate and not a comedienne." If you'd like to see more, write Bruce for a sample.

TORPEDO - is published by Bernard Sampson, 123 Sixth St., Middlesex, NJ 08846. The sub rate is \$5.00/12 issues, game fees are \$4.00 plus \$2.00 NMR fee. TORP features extremely good reproduction and you should definitely check it out.

DIPLOMACY WORLD #26 is out and is a very nice issue. What? You don't receive DW? Then it's your misfortune and none of my own. This latest issue has such fun items as the current top-rated players using Steve McLendon's DRAGON'S TEETH rating system, interesting articles by Bob Sergeant, Jim Benes, and others, and a particularly good article by Doug Beyerlein written for those who have recently decided to publish or are considering it in the near future. you can subscribe to DW by writing Jerry H. Jones, 1854 Wagner St., Pasadena, CA 91107. DW is available for \$5.00/4 issues (one year).

Last issue I reprinted the "Top 20" players from VOLKERWANDERUNG #14. As mentioned above the latest rating appeared in DW. So I thought you might be interested in the real current top 20 players. They are:

Rank	Score	N	Player	Rank	Score	N	Player
1.	48.41	8	Dave Crockett (8W)	11.	24.38	4	Mark Berch (2W)
2.	30.36	3	Ralph Morton (2W)	12.	24.34	17	Joel Klein (4W)
3.	28.82	3	Tom Thorsen (2W)	13.	24.27	11	Mike Lariton (4W)
4.	28.14	5	Konrad Baumeister (2W)	14.	24.14	9	Randolph Smyth (4W)
5.	27.35	3	Arnold Vagts (2W)	15.	23.26	14	Blair Cusack (5W)
6.	27.07	12	Dave Ditter (4W)	16.	22.88	3	Paul Thomas (2W)
7.	26.77	9	Tom Ripper (3W)	17.	22.02	22	Steve McLendon (6W)
8.	26.56	5	Trevor Baille (3W)	18.	21.89	46	Ron Kelly (11W)
9.	26.56	5	Drew McGee (3W)	19.	21.75	7	John Fleming (3W)
10.	25.22	21	Lee Kendter Sr. (6W)	20.	21.02	9	John Michalski (2W)

The DRAGON'S TEETH system is a points system. The score is the player's average score. N = total number of games played as a starting player.

Bruce Linsey's Novice Packet, SUPERNOVA is completed and ready to be distributed! You may have read elsewhere that this novice packet is well done. Bullshit!! It's superb! Bruce really outdid himself in getting this monstrous package together (35 pgs). If you are a beginner to this hobby you really owe yourself the favor of sending for one today. The cost? If you are new to the hobby, tell Bruce in a note with 30¢ postage attached and it's yours. If you are not a novice but would like to have one anyway (a wise decision) it will cost you 75¢. Send for SUPERNOVA, the Novice Packet by writing Bruce Linsey, Bldg 11 Apt. 21, Leisureville, Watervliet, NY 12189.

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THE READERS' POLL - A CLOSE-UP LOOK

A couple of issues ago the Readers' Poll form was printed in MM and I pleaded for a good response. Figuring 20-30 would be a good response, I was nearly overwhelmed when I counted a total of 38 returned to me! Thanks for the time you took one and all. Now for the results . . .

I. ZINE CONTENT

A. Games-

1. "MM/TZ currently has 10 DIP games running in its pages. This number is:"
One said 'too many', two said 'not enough', and 18 said 'just right'.
2. "Suggest the ideal number of games considering the space available (12 pgs):"
The ideal number suggested came out averaging 8.9.
3. "Would you prefer the game results to be sent only to the players in those games as inserts?"

20 respondents said they would not want games as an insert only to players while 3 thought it would be a good idea.

4. "Do you enjoy seeing game results of games where you are not a player?"
Not surprisingly after seeing the answers to #3, that 21 said they liked seeing other game results wherein they are not players while only 3 said they don't care to.

5. "Would you like to see any of the following games in MM/TZ:"

More scattered results to this one - 11 said they'd like ~~XXXX~~ just regular DIP, 14 said they'd prefer some DIP variants, while 11 others said they'd like to see wargames also.

6. "What games would you specifically see offered?"

Some of the games requested were: STELLAR CONQUEST (1), NUCLEAR HOLOCAUST WW III (3), SUBMARINE (1), KINCMAKER (2), WS&IM (2), ORIGINS OF WWII (1); 3rd REICH (1), WAR & PEACE (1), MACHIAVELLI (1), A MIGHTY FORTRESS (1), SAMAURI (1), AFTER THE HOLOCAUST (1), MERCENARY (1), SQUAD LEADER (1), CRUSADES (1).

Conclusion -

Most felt the number (10) of DIP games was close to 'just right', with 9 the suggested ideal number. Al will keep 3 games underway in TZ while MM will try to keep 6-7 going. It was overwhelmingly preferred that all DIP games be included in the zine; that nearly all enjoy seeing games progress where they are not players. Therefore, that's the way we will keep it (for DIP games, that is, where there is more general interest -- some others may go to insert status). From the results of #5 and 6, I think we'll do this: MM was, is, and always will be primarily a DIPzine with the emphasis on DIPLOMACY. There is substantial interest in variants and undoubtedly we'll see one from time to time. Notice the start of a wild and crazy variant in BIC TIMER MAGAZINE this issue: "Vacation Diplomacy". If you have a variant you really want to see started in these pages, it would be a good idea to try and send me any rules, maps, etc. necessary to play so I can give it a look. As for other wargames -- I'd like to keep one such game going. The next won't begin until after SUB-2 has been concluded (about 6 mos.).

B. Articles/Non-game Material

1. "Please rate the following types of articles on a scale of 1-10 with 10 being the 'tops!'"

The following is the average rating given the different types of articles which appear in MM: Humor 8.88; Strategy/Tactics 6.35; MM Player Ratings 6.38; Tournament Rating Systems 3.92; Hobby Politics 4.88; Sci-Fi/Fantasy Book Reviews 4.94; Other Wargames 5.46; Quizzes 6.84; FTF DIP Con Reports 7.11;

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READERS' POLL (Con'd)

Misc. DIP articles 7.77; AnythingElse? Hobby News, Zine Plugs, Editorials, Letters, Feuds, Poems, and Sax and Violins were all suggested as possibilities. 2. "What is your favorite regular feature in MM/TZ? (rated 1-10)"

STUFF 8.85; RRR 7.67; D&D Column 4.71; Games 7.60; Editorials 7.70; BIG TIMER MAG 6.86.

Conclusion -

Obviously, you guys like to be amused. Well, I'll try and find some funny stuff for you. Various kinds of misc. DIP articles will continue to have high priority in MM. Whenever someone locally has a DIP Con, we'll try and tell you about the gory details and we'd like to print any reports you might have get-togethers in your area. Quizzes? OK, I'll see what I can do. MM Player Ratings are up to Black Jack Masters and his trusty computer. How about it, Jack? Will we see ratings in MM every 6-12 months? Now we're getting to the bottom half. S/T articles will appear from time to time but I'll try not to overindulge in this area. Once in awhile a game review or strategy article for a wargame of some kind may appear (say, an article on street fighting in SQUAD LEADER, for example). I'll throw an occasional book review at you -- for those who like them mucho; but not too often for those of you who hate them. Hobby Politics will take a back seat to nearly everything else above while you may never read about a tournament rating system in these pages again! On to the regular features . . .

STUFF has been in MM since the first issue and will be in the last, too. (Not to mention all those inbetween). The RRR letter column will continue for as long as you guys will write me some letters for publication. Editorials will be few and far between, but it's nice to know they will be welcome when there's a reason for them to appear. BIG TIMER has graduated from once-in-awhile to 'sub-zine' status -- look for BTM every month, right, Dan? Naturally the games are the most important element and will remain for as long as MM exists. The Torpid Tower of Terror, the D&D Column will continue but only sporadically as there are several readers who are not into D&D. 'Sirright'?

II. Good vs. Bad

A. "Tell in a short answer what you enjoy or like the most about MM/TZ."

The good: promptness, wide variety, GMing, RRR, Book Reviews, the new mimeo, hobby info, informative info, reading material, a little of everything, diversity, 'style', size, Shakespearean quotes, 'attitude', consistency with quality material ((blush)), ease of reading, etc.

B. "Tell in a short answer what you loathe or dislike the most about MM/TZ."

Poems, prefer to have the zine and results within a week of deadline, on timeness, Black Hole Affair stuff, the old ditto repro, staple is hard to get out, not knowing where my sub stands when looking at address label, the rating system, etc.

Conclusion -

We all know how important promptness is to the enjoyability of receiving a zine we're playing in. MM has been late on 2 or 3 occasions. Please believe that I know how much it means and I'll try my best to have it out on time. A Tuesday mailing after the Friday deadline is about as fast as I can do the job, which should have MM arriving in your mailbox 7-8 days past the deadline. This hasn't been much of a problem in the past nor should it become one in the future. However, even as I type this I must say that from late August through mid-November I have a hard time because of other commitments (my job). And

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READERS' POLL (Con'd)

I've got to tell you guys what's going on now. I coach football at one of the local high schools. The time this takes is tremendous. And this year we finally made it into the playoffs. We are one of the 8 schools vying for the California Large School CIF Central Section Championship. So I thought I'd be all through with coaching by this issue's deadline; instead we have at least one more week and possibly up to three more. But I don't mind. Winning is certainly more fun than losing! So here it is Monday night as I sit typing this frantically even passing up the chance to watch my beloved Rams on Monday Night Football. Ah, whoever said publishing a DIPzine was easy! But getting back to the matter of the Poll results . . . MM will attempt to maintain its diverse offerings since many of you like the variety. As far as the ease of reading, the explanation is simple: I write on the 3rd grade level!

III. Issue Size

A. "The normal sized issue of MM/TZ is 12 pages. However, MM/TZ has been averaging more like 16-20 recently. Financial considerations may restrict the size back to a 12 page average down the line. How do you rate the concept of double-issues?"

Eleven people said it would be worth using their subscription up faster for twice the reading material while eleven also said they think an issue should only count as one issue against their sub no matter what size it is.

B. "What is the ideal number of pages per issue given the format used?"

The average response was 14 pages.

C. "Would you prefer bi-weekly issues of MM/TZ -- one containing all the game results and the other all reading material?"

19 said monthly, 2 bi-weekly.

Conclusion -

This is perhaps the most influential of all sections on the Poll. Noting the results above, I am going to attempt a compromise along Jack Masters' suggestion. MM will be 12 pages in length from now on (usually). This makes so much sense to me for the following reasons: 1) 12 pg. issues can be mailed at the First Class Postage rate. There have been problems lately with inefficient deliveries of 3rd Class Postage after several months of smooth sailing. The 12 pg. 1st class issue with game results should reach their destination more quickly. Now, I will have more to print than what will go into a once-a-month 12 pg. issue. When I have enough time and material, I'll publish an all-reading material issue. This is a great compromise for all. Because $\frac{1}{2}$ of you like extra reading matter, but don't want to see bi-weekly issues coming at you. Good, because I wouldn't do it anyway! But I will release an occasional all-reading issue. It's hard to say now how many but probably not more than 3 or 4 a year. And since it won't have any game results in it, I can make it a biggie sent at 3rd class postage and no one will mind. Any comments?

IV. Paper

Most of you could care less. So could I.

V. Miscellaneous

The following is merely interesting misc. info about our fellow readers. The MM subscriber receives an average of 12 DIP 'zines. He is currently playing in 8 DIP games. 17 people think an NMR deposit will reduce NMR's while 9 think they won't. Those who favored the deposit think for the most part it

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READERS' POLL (Con'd)

should equal the gamefee. (Actually, it averaged out to \$3.53). And finally, 13% of our readers feel they are Excellent players, 43% feel they are Good players, 38% consider themselves moderately good players, 4% feel they are fair, only 4% think they are poor, only 4% very poor, and one player feels he/she is a sexy player! (right Kathy?)

Well, folks, that's it for this poll. It's been real. And it's been nice. But I can't say it's been real nice! Thanks and maybe we can do it again sometime (like about 2 years from now!). Seriously, thank you all for sharing your opinions!

THE GAMES!!

1978II FINAL STATS AND ENDGAME STATEMENTS

1978II MURD'RING MINISTERS (Ron Brown). Austria: Rick Shatto (drop F'06) Ron Kelly. England: John Michalski (Draw S'11). France: Conrad Struckman (out W'05). Germany: Dave Pilant (Draw S'11). Italy: Jerry St. Germain (drop F'05) John Kelley (resigned F'08) Dick Martin (out W'10). Russia: David Mueth (resigned F'05) John H. Masters (out W'08). Turkey: Alfred Rodriguez.

FINAL SUPPLY CENTER CHART

A	5	4	3	4	5	3	3	3	1	1
E	4	6	6	7	8	9	10	11	13	14 - Draw
F	5	5	3	1	0	X	X	X	X	X
G	4	5	5	6	8	8	9	10	11	11 - Draw
I	4	6	9	8	5	5	4	3	1	0
R	4	2	2	2	2	2	1	0	X	X
T	5	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	8	8
	00	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10

GM Comment -

This game was the very first MM game started. Although plagued with numerous dropouts, it continued on and interestingly enough came down to a final struggle between the only three nations played by the original players left. My congratula-

tions to John Michalski (England) and Dave Pilant (Germany) on their draw. The E-G alliance was strong from the beginning with Germany's A Ruh-s-Eng. A Edi-Bel in Fall 1901. From there it just got stronger. St. Germain's Italy played brilliantly though erratically as he had a hard time getting his orders in. One example comes to mind. Jerry called me at 5:00 AM Saturday (he was in MASS), gave me his build for the winter and told me something about what he was going to do next in the game (there was a call for separated seasons). Apparently, he gave me his next Spring orders but I didn't realize it. He never forgave me for his ensuing Spring NMR and soon thereafter he dropped the game. Moral: never call me at 5:00 AM again with anything other than an announcement of a considerable financial gift! Anyway, Turkey did alright early with Russia being attacked by T, E, and G. Austria was another weak player who dropped early. France was competent but went down quickly when he was hit by E, G, and I. So E, G, and T emerged as the dominant powers by 1905. The rest of the game was played to see if it would be a 2 way E-G draw, a 3 way E-G-T draw, or if E would stab for the win. Michalski could have won this one, no doubt about it. Just goes to prove that some people prefer a joint win with an ally than a lone victory by stabbing their ally. John gives his reasons in his comments which follow on the next page. Thanks to all the players and congrats once again to John and Dave!

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1978II (Con'd)

John Michalski - England:

Ah, at last another piece of a victory. My playing time has been so severely restricted these last dozen or two months that I'm surprised that I can pull off anything. The key here of course was that Pilant was just starting out in this hobby, and I always (er, almost always) have a soft spot in my ~~head~~ heart for the shiny faced beginner, esp. since I won my own first game way back when (76IK). Keeping Pilant's Germany in close cooperation meant that even with the surprisingly effective defenses of France, we were eventually able to overcome. The Balkans were a jumble until Al Rodriguez took over Turkey and made a decent effort upwards and outwards. I personally prefer three-way draws in situations like this, in order to speed the game to conclusion, in that a working two-way alliance on one side of the board can rapidly convince all to concede as soon as they see a major power on THEIR side of the board in cahoots with the alliance. Also, of course, it avoids the sticky problems that one can encounter in endgame runs. Personally, I see little difference between 1/3 of a win and 1/2 of a win. As you move toward the proverbial 17/17 though, a single center "slip", accident or otherwise, makes a BIG difference: 1.0 Calhauer points, or 0.0 with thanks and an 'I-owe-you-one'. So a strong alliance on your side of the board plus an honest alliance with whoever comes out on top on the other side, makes for a quicker conclusion. This game wound up only showing the value that a committed alliance has over an amalgamation of 3-5 tiny powers trying to coordinate against it. I don't blame Pilant much for the greedy insistence on 1/2 a loaf instead of 1/3 -- especially after he 'knew' I was such a nice guy that I got to slip him the knife effectively in a later game! (The novice bonus is only good once . . . I'm sorry Rodriguez's Turkey had to work so hard and come up empty, but, that's the breaks, I guess. Publishing takes so much of my time that I was eager to get to any conclusion, and fortunately Germany's central position allowed us the luxury of being able to do pretty much as we darn well pleased. They could slow us, but not stop us, and if they did, we could flip a coin and throw centers to one or the other of us to either force a win on a flip, or (hopefully!) force the opposition to vote for an E-G draw before our 13-11 went to 6-18 or 18-6. Whatever forced the draw vote to pass, I'm glad it did.

My thanks to Ron Brown for running one of the best schedules I've seen in a long time. I like faster games, but in a pinch, reliability like that shown here makes up for even that. It kept up the interest when a lot of the other games (14 not too long ago) that I am/was in fell into total apathy and decay due to GM torpidity and irresponsibility. When you start out in a new game and/or new zine, it's all fun and eager anticipation for players and GM both. Two years down the road, however, it is all too rare to find a GM still doing the job. I've been through the whole process now about twice, and let me say, it really is refreshing to see someone still doing a stand up job at the end as it was in the beginning.

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1979CW SPRING 1908 GAME ENDS WITH A CONCESSION TO FRANCE!!

1979CW has ended in a win for France by concession in the Spring of 1908. Stephen Lee's France had 12 centers and apparently all the remaining players felt he had it wrapped up. Please send in any endgame statements in time for the next issue. They will be published in MM #27 with the final SC Chart. Congratulations, Stephen!

1979CF FINAL STATS AND ENDGAME STATEMENTS

1979CF MURD'RINC MINISTERS (Ron Brown). Austria: John E. Amenta (drop F'02) D.S. Palter. England: Tom Sherwood (drop S'05) Timothy R. Haffey. France: Alfred Rodriguez (out W'05). Germany: Bruce Linsey (win F'08). Italy: Paul Hefti (drop F'07) James R. Williams. Russia: Steve Kerchner (drop S'06) Keith Mercer, (out F'08). Turkey: John F. Seybold (drop F'01) Denise Tucker (out F'08).

	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08
A	5	5	6	6	6	5	6	5
E	4	3	3	2	4	2	0	X
F	4	4	2	1	0	X	X	X
G	5	6	7	8	9	13	15	18
I	5	5	6	6	8	11	11	11
R	6	7	6	7	4	2	1	0
T	4	4	4	4	3	1	1	0

GM Comment-

1979CF began as one of the 'All-Novice' games offered when MM first began. This game also illustrates why I have become of the opinion that 'All-Novice' games are worthless. Two reasons: 1) It's impossible for the GM to know if a player is really a novice or not. I know at least two players who played in my 'All-Novice'

games who were experienced players. And 2) After the first game year you are a grizzled veteran of the wars in Europe. Bruce Linsey is an excellent example of this. He started this game pretty "green" but as you read his Endgame Commentary you will see how quickly he became a lying, coniving, swindling, double-crossing son of a gun -- in short, an excellent DIPLOMACY player with all the necessary skills. Congrats to Brux for a well-deserved win! The key season for Bruce was Fall '06 when he struck hard and gained WAR, MOS, SWE, LON, & LPL! A masterful and well planned stab of two countries at once! After this move it was all downhill for Brux's Germany. This was also the season Hefti's Italy broke the C-I pact by convoying his A Nap all the way to Brest. I really think Paul believed this would insure the chances of a C-I draw as it put him only two units behind Germany and gave him 3 builds for W'06. But it was around this time Paul lost interest and dropped. Jim Williams just didn't have enough time to turn the tide. Congrats, Bruce!

Keith Mercer - Russia:

Since coming into this game as a standby for Russia I had an uphill battle against Brux and with the lack of communication between players he had a victory in his back pocket several game years back. You played your game well Bruce, too bad I didn't wish to work with you in this one but there'll probably be another one.

James R. Williams - Italy:

As the newest player in the game, I really don't have much to say, but that I never stopped me before.

Like a good little standby, I researched the game when I "assumed" the position, so to speak.

As I perused through my vintage issues of MURD'RINC MINISTERS, I found 79CF to be typical of what most games seem to be: filled with brilliant strategy, merciless stabs, and an overabundance of NMR's. In fact, the game had no less than 15 NMR's, and out of 16 moving seasons, only 6 saw all of the powers submitting orders.

Italy topped the list with 5 of these unpardonable atrocities with Austria coming in a close second with 4.

Only two powers totally escaped this hideous plague. France was eliminated in 1905, but to his credit, kept ordering his unit(s) even when all hope was lost. (That makes Al either a good, aggressive player, or a hopeless optimist).

Germany combined all of the aspects of a good Diplomacy general. He

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1979CF (Con'd)

used sound strategy, crafty diplomacy, stabbed when necessary, and like France, dutifully ordered his units every season.

As a result of Bruce's deadly combinations, I managed to inherit an 11 center position and not have any time to do anything with it. Ah, the fortunes of war.

I would liek to congratulate Brux on his victory and in general, a job very well done.

Perhaps someday I'll have a chance to match wits with him for more than one season.

Bruce Linsey - Germany:

This game was the second of my two regular DIP games to start; it missed being my first game by three days. I's like to recount my view of events, and hopefully trigger comments from some of the other players.

In the opening negotiations, Italy (Paul Hefti) and I decided right away that we were going to attack France (Al Rodriguez). France had written to me suggesting a western triple, but this arrangement tends to leave Germany sandwiched between his two more powerful "allies", and so I didn't go for it.

England's (Tom Sherwood) opening letters were not convincing at all. His tone was insincere and I doubted whether his proffered alliance would have lasted long. Besides, this started out as an all-novice game, but Tom already had at least one win under his belt! So I knew that I would eventually be at war with England.

France was more convincing and my decision to attack him was based more on geopolitical considerations than on his letters. With Italian cooperation, I figured that I could gain a lot of momentum from a campaign to the west. Additionally, England agreed to open to the Channel, although he later reneged by writing me after the S'01 deadline that he had changed his mind. But the point is, there was a lot of promise in attacking France.

At this point, I'd like to pat Rodriguez on the back. Al played a superb game, and I congratualate him for holding out as long as he did. Up till the bitter end he kept writing, trying to make the most of a grim situation. Maybe another day, Al!

My relations with England were like playing footsie. First, he went back on his S'01 agreement. Then, because of that, I kept him out of Belgium - and gave him some of his own medicine by writing a letter to him which arrived after the deadline, inviting him into Holland and saying I would go to Belgium in order to put more pressure on France. This set the pattern until Sherwood finally dropped out. It seemed I was always standing him out of a crucial space or correctly guessing his next move. He must have left the game very frustrated!

My opening attack on France was a beaut. First, I snuck into Burgundy. In the fall, I sent Al what has to have been the cleverest letter I ever wrote. He had a choice of defending Paris or Marseilles, but couldn't do both. The letter ensured that he would return A Pic-Par while Italy got Marseilles! Basically, it was a masterpiece of misdirection. After 1901, it was only a matter of time till France was gone.

So now that I've rehashed my early relations with the two western powers, let me turn my discussion to the south.

Who could have asked for a better ally than Paul Hefti? His 1906 stab was a thing of beauty, but all is forgiven because of the way he always kept his word and came up with clever tactics when we were working together. It's a shame that Paul lost interest in the hobby and later dropped. He is a good player, and we became close. Army Naples to Brest! Who could have suspected it of good old Paul! I only wish he had remained in the game and fought it out.

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1979CF (Con'd)

With Austria (John Amenta) I had a non-aggression treaty, coupled with promises to go against Russia when the time was right. When Dan Palter took over the position, he became an Italian puppet and therefore stabbed me the same turn Italy did. It was an arduous task to fight back for lost ground in the Tyrolia-Bohemia-Galicia area, but gradually I recovered and Austria finished the game being pushed back toward Vienna and Budapest.

Russia (Steve Kerchner) was easy to manipulate. He only wrote me once, in S'01, so I knew that a game-long liason was out of the question. My diplomatic efforts here were to keep him in trouble in the south and to orchestrate a Scandinavian conflict between him and England. Both plots worked surprisingly well, and when it came time to attack poor Steve, it was like sliding a steak knife through whipped butter. Sorry, Steve, but correspondence is important!

Turkey was played most of the game by Denise Tucker, and except for my early pact with Italy she was the best ally I had. For several seasons her lone remaining unit, a Black Sea fleet, gave me crucial support against Russia and finally allowed me to take Sev. This relationship illustrates vividly why a large and growing power must communicate with everyone. From a game standpoint, Turkey could not possibly have gone anywhere, but she helped me simply because I was the only person who bothered writing. We remained friendly the whole game. Had I not had that little extra help from Turkey, it is possible that I'd be crumbling to Italy and Austria today. Thank you, Denise. Your one unit gave me the edge I needed to tip the scales!

When Tim Haffey took over England, I offered him survival in exchange for puppethood. In this I was sincere, but Tim kept making little "mistakes" in his moves, and finally when he failed to provide a support I needed, I finished him off. It was easier to order my own units than to worry about which order he'd mess up next time. No offense, Tim.

Toward the end I made a similar offer to Russia, now being played by Keith Mercer. Keith wrote me and agreed to the deal, but promptly broke it, explaining in his press that he knew he couldn't stop me but he wanted to slow me down. Death before dishonor, I suppose. I don't blame him, although if I were in his shoes I would have played for survival.

So finally, in the last few years, my fleets came sailing down toward Italy in the west and my armies invaded the Italian-held French centers, while in the east I got the upper hand versus Austria and what was left of Russia. This is my first win, and I'll never forget it. Thanks particularly to Paul Hefti, Al Rodriguez, and Denise Tucker for a well-played game. And most of all, thanks to the great GM in Bakersfield, the old Main Minister, who made it all possible. This game was fun to play from beginning to end, and I am fortunate to have participated in it. My final count shows that about 160 letters were sent or received by Germany, and there were also 30 or 40 phone calls. A great game if there ever was one!

* * * * *

"The man that hath no music in him-self
Nor is not mov'd with concord of sweet sounds,
Is fit for treasons, strategems, and spoils;
The motions of his spirit are dull as night,
And his affections dark as Erebus:
Let no such man be trusted."

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE, V, 1, 83.

1980IX (Formerly known as MM-9; Please refer to this game as 1980IX from now on)
1980IX SPRING 1901 STAND-OFF OVER TRIESTE AS ALL OTHER ORDERS WORK OK!

Austria (Hanson): F Tri-ALB; A Bud-SER; A VIE-Tri.
England (Schiwautz): F Lon-NTH; F Edi-NWG; A Lpl-YOR.
France (Vaughan): F Bre-PIC; A Par-BUR; A Mar-SPA.
Germany (Kunstenoar): F Kie-HOL; A Ber-KIE; A Mun-RUH.
Italy (Pearson): A VEN-Tri; A Rom-APU; F Nap-ION.
Russia (Gunningham): F SEV-H; A War-GAL; A Mos-UKR; F StP(sc)-BOT.
Turkey (Gray): A Con-BUL; F Ank-CON; A Smy-ANK.

Fall 1901 due 12/26/80. Note: Ron Brown is the GM. Please send all orders to me, not Al Rodriguez. Thanks.

Please also note that J.P.Kunstenoar's address was incorrectly printed last time. It should read 3638 ~~XX~~ Durocher #4, Montreal, Quebec, CANADA H2X 2E8.

1980IX Press-

PARIS-ITALY: You have my support.

PARIS-RUSSIA: Beware of hungry werewolves drinking tea.

BAKERSFIELD: Werewolves of London?

LONDON: England will remain neutral until we receive an intelligent proposal.

PARIS-AUSTRIA: Happy Thanksgiving. May it be peaceful.

PARIS-GERMANY: Look west young man. Then go north.

PARIS-LONDON: It's a long road to Tipperary?!

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1979HN SUMMER 1907 - Eng. F Wal-r-OTB (NRR); French A Mun-r-BOH; Turk. F Smy-r-SYR

1979HN FALL 1907 IS THERE A F-G ALLIANCE? WHERE DOES THAT LEAVE ITALY?

France (Hartman): A BOH-s-German A Vie; A BEL-H; F LYO-H; F SPA(sc)-s-F Lyo; F MID-Naf; F NAT-Mid; F Wal-LON; F ENG-s-F Wal-Lon.

Germany (Masters): F Nth-HOL; F Nwg-NTH; A YOR-Lon; A Bur-GAS; A Ruh-BUR; A Ber-SIL; A Mos-SEV; A UKR-s-A Mos-Sev; A Con-ANK; A ARM-s-A Con-Ank; A VIE-H.

Italy (Shelton): F WES-Spa(sc); F TYR-Lyo; F TUN-Naf; A TRI-Vie; A BUD-s-A Tri-Vie; A RUM-Sev; F Aeg-CON; A BUL-s-F Aeg-Con; F Smy-s-F Aeg-Con/d/-r-Aeg,Eas,OTB.

Turkey (Howard): A Ank-SMY; F SYR-s-A Ank-Smy.

Winter 1907 and Spring 1908 due 12/26/80.

1907 Supply Center Chart

England- ~~Von~~.....(0) OUT

France- Home,Bel,Por,Spa,Lpl,~~Von~~,LON.....(8) 0

Germany- Ber,Kie,Den,Hol,War,Swe,~~Von~~,~~Von~~,Vie,Mos,Edi,Nwy,StP,Sev,MUN,ANK..(14)+2

Italy- Home,Tri,Tun,Gre,Ser,Bul,Bud,CON,RUM.....(11) +2

Turkey- ~~Von~~,Smy.....(1) -1

Eric Howard is leaving the country. He has left orders for his one unit until the end of 1908. A standby (if necessary) will be called not until that time.

1979HN Press-

SYRIA: The Sultan has submitted final conditional orders, he regrets that he cannot continue the game. After about December 10th, his address will be: Eric Howard, Wellington Farms Village, Christ Church, New Zealand.

SEVASTOPOL: The future alliance structure of the German Empire may well be based on what transpired in Rumania in Fall 1907.

RUMANIA: The Italian Commander reports a startling discovery from this liberated province. - A document found in a sacked German Consulate alleges the German Field Marshall is a half brother of the French Prime Minister. They have the same Gypsy Mother (who can not identify either of their fathers).

1979HO SPRING 1906 SULTAN LOSES TRACK OF MILITARY FORCES AS FRENCH LOSE THE NTH!
Austria (Tucker): COA: A Vie-GAL; A BUD-s-A Vie-Gal; A Tri-VIE; A GRE-H;

A SER-s-A Gre; F ALB-s-French F Tun-Ion; A NAP-H;
A Rom-APU.

England (Mercer): A LPL-H; F Edi-NTH; F HEL-s-F Edi-Nth.

France (Williams): A BEL-Lon; F Nth-c-A Bel-Lon/d/-r-Den,Nwg,Yor,Lon,OTB;
A KIE-H; A HOL-s-A Kie; A Ruh-MUN; F Lon-WAL;
F TRI-s-F Lon-Wal; F Lon-WAL; F Bre-ENG; F Tun-ION;
F Lyo-TYS; F Mar-LYO.

Germany (Haffey):** NMR! F BER-H.

Russia (Coughlan): F Rum-BLA; A Gal-RUM; A SEV-s-A Gal-Rum; A War-SIL;

A Arm-Ank/d/-r-Syr,OTB; F Nwy-SKA; A StP-NWY.

Turkey (Kuszynski): A Smy-ARM; F ANK-s-A Smy-Arm; A Bul-CON; A Con-Ank/NSU/;
F AEG-H.(unordered).

Fall 1906 due 12/26/80.

*Denise Tucker will be home at Rte 1 Box 705E, Eureka, MO 63025 from Dec.20-Jan 7.

**Would Al Rodriguez, 2112 Roosevelt, Bakersfield, CA 93304 please submit
standby orders for Germany?

1970HO Press-

ENGLAND-RUSSIA: What can I say? Thank you. Now, onward troops, fight
to the death. Beware the Russian horde.

RUSSIA-GERMANY: The Tsar cannot believe the multitude of lies which has
issued out of the Kaiser's mouth. Therefore, to spare Germany the further
indignity that the insane Kaiser is exposing her to -- Russian troops will
restore order by occupying Berlin as quickly as possible. Lang lieben Deutschland
und Russland! Gott strafe den Kaiser und England!

RUSSIA-TURKEY: Hey Sultan Dan, after I made you famous hobby-wide in the
new Novice Packet (SUPERNOVA), the least you can do is give me the Black Sea
or Ankara, preferably both!

PARIS: The government of France would like to dedicate this season to the
memory of Darrell Staley, who made this game interesting in the early going,
(coming soon... dedications to Joel Blank, Dave Barker, and Tim Haffey.

RUSSIA-AUSTRIA: I haven't heard from you lately. I hope you didn't take
offense at that innocent French message last fall!

RUSSIA-ALL: Alright, which one of us brave souls is going to tell the
GM that this season is actually Spring 1906 and not Spring 1907?

BAKERSFIELD-RUSSIA: I know, I know!

RUSSIA-FRANCE: Where shall the Tsar meet you for the victory celebration?
London, Copenhagen, or Berlin? I prefer Tivoli myself but you seem like you
would feel more at home in the Tiergarten.

1979G FALL 1909 POPE RENOUNCES TSAR! PLEADS FOR HELP AGAINST THE RUSSIAN BEAR!

England (Grabar): F Por-SPA(sc); F MID-s-F Por-Spa(sc); F NAT-s-F Mid;
F NWY-s-German F Fin-StF(sc); F Nth-BEL.

Germany (Bumpas): F Fin-STP(sc); F BOT-s-F Fin-StP(sc); F BAL-Lvn; A Kie-MUN;
A RUH-s-A Kie-Mun; A Ber-s-A Kie-Mun/d/-r-Kie,OTB;
A Pic-PAR; A BRE-s-A Pic-Par.

Italy (Haehnel): A Tya-PIE; A MAR-s-A Tya-Pie; A Spa-TUS; F LYO-c-A Spa-
Tus; F Tys-ROM; F Wes-TYS; F Naf-TUN; A GAS-Spa; A BUR-Gas;
F Con-BUL(sc).

Russia (Kuszynski): A Bul-GRE; F Ank-CON; A Gal-BUD; A Tri-TYA; A VEN-s-
A Tri-Tya; A MOS-s-A StP; A LVN-s-A StF; A StP-H/a/;
A Pru-BER; A SIL-s-A Pru-Ber.

((1979G Con'd next pg))

1979G (Coh'd)

Winter 1909 and Spring 1910 due 12/26/80. There is a call for a E-G-I-R draw. Please vote with your next orders. No vote received counts as an affirmative vote.

1979G 1909 SUPPLY CENTER CHART

England- Home, Nwy, For, SPA, BEL.....	(7)	+2
Germany- Bel , Kie, Hol, Bel , Far, Den, Bre, Swe, MUN, STF.....	(8)	0
Italy- Nap, Rom, Yen , Tun, Smy, Gry , Con , Mar, Spa , Mun , BUL.....	(6)	-4
Russia- Mos, War, Sev, StP , Rum, Pol , Vie, Ank, Tri, Ser, VEN, BER, CON, CRE..	(13)	+4 only room for 2

1979G Press-

LONDON: Sorry, but all I see is a draw. Therefore, I propose a 4-way draw.

ROME: Anyone interested in calling a halt and going against Russia? I will not move in on Germany or England if you agree. Unless we gang up he's going to win.

* * * * *

NEW GAME START! KNOWN AS MM-10*

WINTER 1900 EUROPE PREPARES FOR WAR!

Austria: George Collins, 30 Sierra Ave., Piedmont, CA 94611.
 England: Jack W. Smith, 16944 Norborne St., Redford, MI 48240.
 France: Deane Spurdakes, 154 West 70 St., #2D, New York, NY 10023.
 Germany: Bobby Stephens, 6403 Claude Ct., Ft. Worth, TX 76135.
 Italy: W. A. Hugh, 4824 W. McFadden #57, Santa Ana, CA 92704.
 Russia: Mark William Kraft, 14690 Badger Pass, Morgan Hill, CA 95037.
 Turkey: John H. Masters, 25711 N. Vista Fairways Dr., Valencia, CA 91355.
 Spring 1901 orders are due 12/26/80. Good luck to all!

* * * * *

GAME OPENINGS

DIPLOMACY - The regular variety of DIP game featuring three week deadlines, combined seasons, no black press, etc. I have sent some who have inquired a copy of the (old) dittoed Houserules but for those who have not received them and have requested a copy, please hold on until next issue as I plan on having another revised set of HR's printed so I will have a mimeosed copy that will be easier to read, etc. Preference lists are accepted. A 'Preference List' is merely telling me your order of preference of which country you would like to play. You should get no worse than your third choice. All final Country Assignments are left to the discretion of the CM. The gamefee for this game is \$3.00. There is also a required NMR fee (deposit of \$3.00 for this game that is refundable at the game's conclusion provided you successfully got your moves in every turn. You must maintain your subscription to MM also. Further clarification of these terms will appear in the Houserules. The following persons have indicated interest in joining a game but have not met the requirements above (yet) of: a 12 issue subscription to MM (\$5.50), gamefee (\$3.00), and NMR deposit (\$3.00) in some way or other - W.A. Hugh, Stephen G. Arnawoodian, Martin Ethington, and Bruce Filbeck. These 7 positions will go to those who first get the payment for the game in to me. Thanks.

MACHIAVELLI - Jim Broshot will CCM this game. % \$5.00 gamefee plus a sub to MM are required. CARRETT, Falter, and Scott have all requested me hold a spot for them. Jim needs five all together.

BIG TIMER MAGAZINE

by Dan Kuszynski

BIRTHDAYCON '80 was a small success at best, but, what can be expected at such short notice? The next get-together will be better planned and everyone given ample time to prepare to come. (Could it be that people have heard Polish birthdays are a waste of time?) Anyway, BIRTHDAYCON drew about 10 locals and only two people from out of town. Black Jack Masters came up from Valencia dressed as a Pilgrim and had everyone guessing if he thought it was Halloween or Thanksgiving. He brought Bill Schwantz who spent most of the time in ~~Bakersfield asking people if they liked his beard.~~ They both seemed to enjoy themselves but not one real DIPLOMACY game was played. These get-togethers are meant to bring out-of-town people together and I admit I was a little embarrassed not to have met the goal of BIRTHDAYCON. Anyway, let's all show up for Dave Grabar's GrabarCon on December 26th and put some fun into our holidays. Anyone interested in going can meet here in Bakersfield and we'll car pool. I predict a huge success.

Well, there was a huge turnout for Vacation Diplomacy Stand-by players. So many that I had to call Arnett to get his moves. So what? VD (Vacation Diplomacy) leaves the players with such a hopeless feeling that sometimes it takes a phone call to bring the players to realize it is not a dream, that there is a Vacation Diplomacy game and moves are due. Now, to the VD:

VACATION DIPLOMACY #1 SPRING 1901	AUSTRIA DEFEATS 4 INVADING ARMIES! RUSSIAN FLEET FIGHTS OFF TURKS! FINTE BEAN FLEET IN BALTIC!
Austria (Al "Cisco" Rodriguez):	A VIE-Tya; A Bud-SER; F Tri-ALB; Pinto F-BAL.
England (Ron "Mr.Minister" Brown):	F Edi-NWG; F Lon-NTH; A Lpl-YOR; A Alb-GRE.
France (Jim "No NMR" Williams):	F Bre-MID; A Par-PIC; A Mar-SPA; A GAL-Vie.
Germany (Bob "The Novice" Arnett):	F Cre-AEG; A MUN-Tya; F Kie-DEN; A Ber-KIE.
Italy (John "Black Jack" Masters):	F Ice-NAT; A VEN-Tya; A ROM-Ven; F Nap-ION.
Russia (Dave "The Machine" Grabar):	F SEV-Rum; A WAR-Gal; F Sar-WES; F Stp(sc)-BOT; A Mos-UKR.
Turkey (Jim "Postcard" Bumpas):	A SWITZ-Tya-Boh; A Smy-ARM-Sev; F Ank-Con-SMY; A Con-BUL-Rum.

Fall 1902 due 12/26/80.

VACATION DIF. #1 Press-

FRANCE-RUSSIA: Hey Dave! Are you out there? My vacationing unit is wandering around aimlessly for lack of anything better to do. Any suggestions?

FRANCE-AUSTRIA: !Ey Al! Yo no quierro herite, pero, tu no me escribista. Hazme una oferta nos sentiremos. Hablaremos. Yo soy un hombre razonable.

HOLLAND: Reporters in this neutral country have heard a terrible rumor! It seems there is a criminal organization calling itself SFECTRE which has developed a bomb they call a "Nuclear Warhead". They claim it is so powerful that the area for miles around the blast area will be contaminated with what they call "radioactive fallout" and will be uninhabitable and even impassible for many, many years! This terrorist organization threatens to detonate this device somewhere in Europe this Fall! Most scientists are skeptical, however.

FRANCE-ENGALND: Damn! That Channel looks rough. I wouldn't cross it in a bathtub, would you?

BLACKJACK-VD: VACATION DIPLOMACY is as wild and disorganized as Dan Kuszynski's apartment!

BERLIN: Rumor has it that every sovereign nation is lying, cheating, and stealing over those mysterious BIG TIMER VD CARDS. Our government is not participating in this covert act.

MUNICH-CRETE: Wrong direction idiot! Can't you follow simple orders!?

BIG TIMER: This game is running on contributions, so send some.

BYE!

JENNIFER KINC'S COLUMN, SPORTS, THAT IS

FOOTBALL

It is getting toward playoff time now and there are quite a few teams that still have a chance.

In the NFC East, Philadelphia is probably going to go all the way. Even if Dallas wins all of their games and beats Philadelphia in Dallas, they still would be a game behind. But don't count the Cowboys out as a wild card team.

The division title in the NFC Central will go to the best of the worst. Either Minnesota or Detroit, but I doubt if there will be a wild card from this division. Chicago ~~■~~ should have started the season with Vince Evans and they might have had more of a chance.

There is a toss-up in the NFC West, with the Falcons currently ahead of the Rams, but those two meet the last Sunday of the season. Whichever wins will probably take the title and the other the wild card. I realize the Rams have to play Dallas, but the Falcons have to play the Eagles; I predict both will lose those games and it will come down to the wire.

In the AFC East, it looked for awhile as if it was going to be Buffalo, but Miami's getting hot and the Patriots still have a good chance of at least a wild card if not the division.

The AFC Central has turned into a very interesting race. Pittsburgh is feeling age, the lack of a pass rush, and injuries very badly. If they don't win in Houston (the game of the year), they are out of it. (By the way, I'm rooting for Houston; I HATE PITTSBURGH!) Cleveland has a good shot at the title also, particularly if they beat Houston in Cleveland.

San Diego was the clear favorite to repeat last year's performance, but because of basically too many interceptions by Fouts, they are now behind Oakland, the surprise team of the year. If Denver could find a decent quarterback that didn't remind one of a statue (I intensely dislike Denver also) they might have a chance one year.

PREDICTIONS:

NFC East - Eagles
NFC Central - Lions
NFC West - Falcons
Wild Cards -
Rams and Cowboys
NFC Title - Eagles

AFC East - Patriots
AFC Central - Oilers
AFC West - Chargers
Wild Cards -
Browns and Raiders
AFC Title - Oilers

SUPER BOWL WINNER:

EAGLES

No room for basketball (I'm trying to keep this to 1 page) but I'd like to make a proposal: I want male exotic dancers for professional sporting events. You men have nice girls to look at; I want to see some nice men cheering the teams on. What about it?

You'll read about basketball next month and of course more football. I'd like some feedback and I'm sure Ron would too. Also, any ideas for a good title?

Jen

((Thanks for the enlightening column, Jen and I'm glad to see that you pretty much share the same feelings about this year's winners as myself. But MALE exotic dancers? HMMMMM. Thanks and I'll look forward to next month's column-RB))

READERS' RHETORICAL REPLIES

((from Jenifer King))

Dear Ron,

I'd like to say a little something in defense of players that take on too many games and then drop them all. When I first entered this hobby, I really only intended to be in two games, RETALIATION and ENVOY. I am now in 3 games and I'm going to be starting two more soon. Everyone wants you to join their games and I'm always getting really nice looking 'zines from publishers. It's hard to resist. There may not be a cure for this, but you hvae to look at it from the players point of view also.

Jen

((Yep, I know what you mean. As Bob Olsen mentioned to me not long ago, it's usually easy to play a number of games at once but occasionally it seems that a bunch of game results arrive all at once and it's a real battle to keep up your letter writing in them all. A good example of this is my good 'ole buddy Al Rodriguez who is probably going to be dropping all of his games here very soon. He (in my opinion) got into too many games and it's to the pint now where it's more than work than fun to play. When that happens to someone, they usually drop from sight and find some more constructive way to occupy themselves than playing DIF by mail. Take care, gentle reader, and don't let yourself get over-involved in this or any other hobby! - RB))

((from Gary Coughlan))

Dear Ron,

I see my persecutor, Mr. Robert Olsen, has now followed me to California. I have had to endure his slings and arrows in THE VOICE OF DOOM and in RETALIATION so you can imagine my shock when I see you had given him a forum in MURD'RING MINISTERS. Beware of him, Ron! Yon Olsen has a lean and hungry look. Well not lean (snort, chorkle) but certainly hungry! As you may have guessed, I have come to bury Mr. Bob Olsen not to praise him.

Dick Martin had the good sense not to dispute my feelings about what his zine should be named. He is a real angel of a guy. Not so Mr. Olsen who showed no fear of rushing in where Dick feared to tread. And his reasons for preferring the simple-minded name GRAB DOTS!! were full of vacillating poppycock (showing that Mr. Olsen has more than one thing which shakes like a bowlful of jelly).

Actually I think Mr. Olsen has had it in for me ever since I successfully led a Turkish army into his Silesia in our R-3 game in RETALIATION. (In Spring 1905, isn't that a scream!!). I had to do this feat without using the "intellectual blackmail" that Mr. Olsen has accused me of since it was above his head (I used instead the intimidation that Dan "Big Timer" Kuszynski taught me so well).

I think it is well to remember the words that Dick Martin himself used about Mr. Olsen: "The pudgy prognosticator's fame is even spreading to the pages of VOD. From Rockville to Albany from Wichita . . . boy is that BIG!!!"

And now Mr. Olsen has "spread" to California. He had to leave Nebraska for Kansas (which has 5,037 more sq. mi. of room) and if the R-3 press and the fake VOD Centaurus press are any indications at all, he will soon have to move to the next largest state whcih is South Dakota.

I am honored to be the MM of the M for October and following a two mont-long tradition of nominating the next winner, I nominate Jennifer King as November's

((Con'd next pg.))

RRR (Con'd)

MM of the M for service rendered above and beyond the call of duty.

Briefly, Jennifer has brought a blast of fresh air to MM by becoming the first non-Bakersfield regular contributing columnist. But what really cinched the award for Jennifer is that she doesn't starch shorts and for the way she exposed Jack Masters for ordering armies to Rumania that he doesn't have. (in her gaem, Jack didn't have an army in Rumania. In my game, Jack just put his army in what used to be my Rumania. I should have listened earlier to Jennifer's revelation!). One last thing: How did I get stuck with the name, "Memphis Flash"? Ron, you know life in the South moves at a slow pace!

Sincerely,
Cary L. Coughlan

((Congratulations to Jennifer, this month's Murd'ring Minister of the Month! I think you have made a worthy choice and I'm sure that this is an honor that Jen will hold sacred for all her days! (Would you believe for a week or so?) This just goes to show that you've got to keep an eye open to Black Jack's tricky and devious ways. . . . As for Bob, I think I'll let him reply, if he will. And the very appropriate "Memphis Flash" was first coined by Don Swartz. Thanks for writing and I'll be looking forward to see who Jen decides should receive next month's MM of the M Award. - RB))

((from John Caruso))

Ron

With every issue, MM gets better and better. Sort of like a fine wine, it gets better with age.

You asked me where was I during the "Leeder Poll". I voted you higher than your average. It's just that everyone else doesn't have the same tastes and doesn't vote the same way I do. Besides, one "0" vote from an enemy can offset six "8" votes, or three "9" votes. But those type of grudge votes we all must endure. I'm sure next year you'll be in the Top 10. I hope I can make the Top 20.

I was surprised at some of the names on your top 20 listing, mainly because most of them don't play anymore. I've played with a few of them and can confidently state, they are all "tough" players. I was surprised though, not to see the "old-timers", the old hobby stallworths up there. Names like Edi Birsan, John Boyer, and Howard Mahler. Keep up the "excellent" work.

John

((Your comments regarding the Leeder Poll are interesting. I bet this is what happened to Bruce's score on the GM Poll. I think Brux is an excellent GM; and probably so do most of his players. However, Bruce did get a few folks riled up over the BLACK HOLE thing and those handful who voted him a "0" because of it took its toll on his overall ranking. So much for this year's poll. Thanks for the kind words. - RB))

((from Mike Mills))

. . . a few words from me on the Linsey vs. Caruso/Byrne thing. Well, I think that it's fine for them to disagree with each other and lash out at one another, but I don't think that they deserve an audience ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ for it. This captive audience of their's now knows that they are argumentative, but other than that what have they gained? And for all the good the feud is ~~x~~ doing, we may as well watch the "Edge of Night" and apply it to 1901 negotiations ((Con'd next pg.))

RRR (con'd)

Oh well, la-di-dah. . .

GESTETNER huh? Ohhh. . . the Mercedes of the mimeo world. . . and I'm stuck with the Chevy. . . me and Sal Mimeo -- my AB Dick 437 -- a defunct model -- but has nice cast iron parts and a huge motor! A real 62 Chevy, you might say. . .

Oh well. . . I just got PASSCHENDAELE #29. You know, Cuerrier's little warehouser . . . actually 104 pgs. If you don't have it, ask for IT!!! Great stuff, all sorts of stuff . . . great effort -- the record. . .

Anything else . . . ? Naw! OK. . . Into the 'velope ya goooooooooooooooooo!

Mike Mills

((Thanks for writing, Mike. Regarding the Linsey vs. Caruso fued! I think you may have heard by now that it looks as if the parties involved may have reached the point of calling a truce. I received letters for print from Bruce, John, and Kathy but then later was requested by both not to print them as negotiations were taking place between them. Goog. I, like nearly all of us am looking forward to a friendly settlement so we can all get back to what we are involved in this hobby for: playing DIPLOMACY! I won't say anything else on this matter and I just would rather try to forget about it and go on running a DIPzine and playing a few games. All I've done (or at least tried) was to present an open forum here but I think I may be a bit more selective in the future. About the CESTETNER -- I like it; it's a breeze to operate and the only thing I dislike is putting too much ink on the silk screen so that the print comes out a bit too dark at times. I guess that's better than it being too light, eh? I think your machine does a great job printing EMHAIN MACHA. . . I borrowed Al R.'s copy of the PASSCHENDAELE #29 and am looking forward to having time to 'browse' through it someday. I agree, it's incredible. Again, thanks for writing. - RB))

((from Dick Martin))

Dear Ron,

Ah, yet another letter from me. Amazing, eh? It sounds like our friend Mr. Cogan is hyper about the name of my zeen (or lack thereof). Well, Gary, let me just say that if I were to put out a zeen, I wouldn't call it THE VOICE OF DOOM! Hey, I have a great time thinking up new titles, why stick with the same old one!? (My personal fave is ????, by the way . . .).

I like the new print! Now I can actually read the thing! I sure could have used the \$10 though . . .

Football . . . who cares? With a year like this is for baseball, how can you even think of football? . . .

Take care,
Dick

((Like I said somewhere, sometime, I think you have a right to call your zine anything you want. I do think though that whatever name you choose you would do better to stick with merely to avoid confusion when someone wants to say something nice about your zine. I'm thinking especially of newer players to the hobby who may not realize that ????, RETALIATION, and GRAB DOTS!! are all the same zine! But it's your baby so do whatever you'd like. This was an exceptional year for baseball, but football will always be my number one love. Like my old friend Bill Williamson used to say, "All other sports are just filler until it's time for football again!" Thanks for writing! - RB))

MM STANDBY LIST

The following people are listed as current standbys for regular DIPLOMACY: Keith Mercer, Dave Grabar, John Caruso, Jack Masters, Ron Kelly, Timothy R. Haffey(?), Denise Tucker, James R. Williams, Paul Goodrich, Don Swartz, Steve Heinowski, W.A. Hugh, and Jim Gray. If anyone wants on or off, please let me know. Thanks!

The following are on the list for MACHIAVELLI: Bates. Anyone else?

Is there anyone who would like to standby for either SUBMARINE or VACATION DIPLOMACY? Let me know.

* * * * *

STILL MORE STUFF (Con'd from pg. 2)

Well, it's official! DIPCON XIV will be held in conjunction with ORIGINS on the 4th of July weekend at the Dunfey Hotel in San Mateo. All the more reason for all of you to try and attend. I will be there for sure as will most California gamers. Hope to see many of you this summer!

Alright! Now for the most important announcement in a long time! Nominations are now open for the very first MURD'RING MINISTERS-sponsored hobby-wide award: THE NIXON -- awarded to the Big Liar of the Year. Send in your nominations and a paragraph explaining your choice. The winning entry will be published in MM and the winner will receive an original Jerry H. Jones' 'Certificate of Diplomatic Survival'. This handsome certificate is professionally printed, 8 1/4 x 8 3/4, and is suitable for framing. You will be proud to have this hanging in your garage or somplace special. (The bathroom, perhaps?) Who will win this certain-to-be-coveted award -- THE NIXON? It's up to you to decide. The winner of the 1980 NIXON will be announced in Jan-Feb 81. Get those nominations in right x away!

* * * * *

WRAP-UP

Well, it's time to finish this one up and go do the fun part of publishing now. A couple of hours worth of printing on ye olde MM Mimeo, more on collating, stapleing, stamping, addressing, and a trip to the P.O. annex to get them on their way to youse guys as soon as possible. Oh joy!

By now you may be wondering where is the TWILIGHT ZINE? Al's ~~brainchild~~ brainchild should be on its way to you (separately of course) in a few days. Al was out with some of his wild and crazy friends 4-Wheel driving in a dried-up riverbed nearby. Yeah, now you know what people do in Bakersfield for cheap thrills! They managed to get their vehicles stuck in the sand and while Al was pushing and shoving, helping get it unstuck he slipped and fell down (he never was very coordinated, either!) and received an injury to his typing fingers! So please bear with us, those of you in a TZ game. The results should reach you soon. And next time you happen to write Al, remember to enclose a "poor Baby" postscript!

And remember . . .

"What's past and what's to come is
strew'd with husks
And formless ruin of oblivion."

TROILUS AND CRESSIDA IV, v, 165

BYE!

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